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# "Illegal" strike threat of Hospital Workers wins big gains

Hospital Workers throughout southern Ontario have won a great victory in their struggle for decent wages by serving notice that they will no longer sit still for the vicious exploitation which they have been forced to bear for many years. The monopoly capitalist government of Premier Davis and the various hospital boards of directors made up of capitalists and their representatives have been thrown into a panic by the growing militancy of the hospital workers and their determination to obtain a living wage from their labour.

For a long time, workers in the hospital field have been denied anything but the most meagre existence by the capitalist government and the hospital boards. The government has imposed "spending ceilings" in the hospital field which have completely disregarded the high rate of inflation and increases in the cost-of-living for hospital workers. The hospital boards have played the willing role of forcing the workers to accept lower and lower wages in order to 'conform' to the government imposed 'ceilings'. Throughout this process of attacks by the capitalists on the standard of living of the hospital workers, the workers themselves have been denied the basic right of any worker to strike in defence of their wages. Thus the capitalists have used their parliament not only to legislate 'ceilings' on spending against the interests of the hospital workers but also to make it 'illegal' for the workers to do anything to oppose these ceilings.

In every case the ceilings imposed by the government have been far below the rise in the cost of living which is caused by the capitalists themselves trying to make maximum profits. So, hospital workers have been forced by these conditions to seek 'illegal' means of achieving their just demands. The Toronto hospital workers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, spearheaded the militant actions of hospital workers when they announced that they would defy the law of the capitalists and strike in 12 Toronto hospitals on May 1, if the capitalists did not come up with a reasonable offer for wages by that time.

Toronto hospital workers were followed and supported by the decision of hospital workers in south-western Ontario to strike on May 3 in support of the same demands that the Toronto hospital workers were making. This included the workers at St. Mary's Hospital in Kitchener as well as over 2,000 other members of the Service Employees International Union which represents hospital workers in several western Ontario cities.

While the hospital workers were making preparation to go on strike if necessary to back up their wage

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## Editorial

# Two class lines on Trade Unions

There's a growing concern among working people in Canada and throughout the whole capitalist world about the present crisis in the capitalist system. The capitalist class is responding to this crisis by using every means at its disposal to shift the burden onto the backs of the working class through high rates of inflation, unemployment, suppression of workers struggles and deception of every sort. As workers throughout the country rise up in opposition to the plans of the capitalists, it becomes increasingly necessary to understand the role of the Trade Unions in protecting the interests of the working class.

Every day it's becoming clearer to militant workers that there are two conflicting lines on the Trade Unions. And more and more workers every day are grasping the essential class nature of this conflict. On the one side is the line of the capitalist class which despises the Trade Unions, wishes to see them destroyed and does everything possible to suppress the struggles of organized workers in defence of their jobs, wages, and working conditions. This class also vehemently opposes the organization of the unorganized workers and attacks every attempt by the unorganized to build Trade Unions for their self-defence. On the other side is the line of the working class movement which cherishes the Trade Unions, seeks to strengthen them and make them effective tools in the struggle between the two classes. This class also fights for the organization of unorganized workers and shows the highest and best sentiments of class unity in carrying forward the work of helping the unorganized masses build their own effective tools of protection.

In the practical work of organizing the unorganized, the politics and economics of class struggle are combined. On the one hand the workers are seeking improvements in their economic situation through job security, better wages and benefits, and decent working conditions. At the same time the capitalists fight on every front to smash the developing Trade Union organization of the workers. They use every method possible such as: increasing the wages of some workers and not others to create splits among the workers or increasing the wages of all workers to undermine the militancy of the workers; mobilizing their "bum-boys" and "favourites" among the workers to spread lies and rumours against the union, firing workers who support the union and terrorizing the workers who oppose the capitalists right to dictate everything. Faced with the situation the workers are forced to clearly distinguish between the lies, distortions and terrorism of the capitalists and the real interest of the workers which lies in building the Trade Union organization for their self-defence. Thus the economic struggle of the workers is also a political struggle in which workers begin to see the clear lines of class struggle and class domination which exist in the capitalist society.

The working class seeks to build the trade unions as defence organizations and this line is a healthy, progressive and human tendency within the society. The capitalist class and particularly the monopoly capitalist class seeks to smash, cripple, mislead or otherwise destroy the power and effectiveness of the Trade Unions. This class has no concern for the dignity of workers or even for the common everyday needs of the vast majority of working people. It is the rule-of-thumb of capitalist thinking and action to undermine every spark of fighting spirit in workers, to wreck their organizations and to thwart every attempt by unorganized

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# I. W. A. bargains for new contract for B.C. Woodworkers

Contract negotiations began in the B.C. forest industry on Monday, March 4, 1974, between the International Woodworkers of America and Forest Industrial Relations. The particular contract under negotiation affects 28,000 coast woodworkers represented by the I.W.A. Thtoughout the province there are a total of about 37,000 woodworkers whose contracts expire later this year. Forest Industrial Relations is the bargaining agent for the coastal forest companies. The coast woodworkers are now working under a 2 year contract which expires on June 15 of this year.

The main demands of the workers centre on combatting the rapidly increasing cost of living. The workers are demanding a 1-year contract, a $1.00 per hour increase in wages on a base rate of $4.45 per hour, and a cost-of-living escalator clause whereby workers would be paid every 3 months according to official statistics on inflation. These demands are quite obviously necessary in order to combat skyrocketing prices of goods, particularly food, fuel and housing.

Woodworkers are also demanding an upward revision of 50 cents per hour for sawmill offbearers, chipper crews, planer men and feeders and all graders and tallymen including P.L.I.B. (Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau) categories. This same revision is demanded for all tradesmen and oilers I.W.A. is demanding shorter working hours and a shift differential increase of 50 cents per hour for afternoon and graveyard shifts on top of the present 15 cents

I W A. is also bargaining for improvements in vacations with pay

At the I.W A. Coast Wages and Contract Conference held during the first weekend in February this year, a list of 53 demands were agreed upon—all of them necessary, but many of them specifically applicable to particular needs and problems in one section of the forest industry or the other.

But F.I.R. came up with a set of 33 counter-proposals aimed at snatching away the hard-earned advances fought for and won by woodworkers during struggles in previous years. Militant trade unionists in the I.W.A. have stated that F.I.R. will have a very hard time in pushing even one of these 33 counter-proposals through. The worst of these are for compulsory overtime and the seven day work week.

The reason why the capitalists want overtime is that it leads to greater exploitation of workers, so the monopoly capitalists can reap greater profits. First, with fewer workers working longer hours, more workers are forced into the ranks of the unemployed. These workers experience greater hardship and become more impoverished. Competition amongst the workers for jobs increases and sharpens as the supply of labour that the capitalist can draw on for hire grows. These conditions allow the capitalists to force down the real wages of workers over a period of time and lower their standard of living. The result is that workers find it necessary to labour for longer hours just to make in wages, what they initially made in the "normal" working day. These conditions enable the capitalists to increase still further the number of hours overtime worked.

Secondly, overtime allows the capitalists to turn over their capital faster Their capital can absorb more labour in a given time. Since profit is labour expropriated from the workers,

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demands, the capitalist press was whimpering about the illegal nature of the workers plans in an attempt to whip up some sentiment against the hospital workers. But the campaign of the capitalist press met with no success and it was evident that the hospital workers had wide support for their demands and their plans of strike action among other sections of working people.

The hospital workers have won a significant victory in this present phase of struggle against the exploitation of the monopoly capitalists. At the same time the monopoly capitalists are faced with a great problem because of the growing militancy and the sentiment among unorganized hospital workers to get organized. The capitalists are trying to escape from the growing anger of the organized workers by coming up with a last minute offer which the hospital workers, by a narrow margin, decided to accept. At the same time the capitalist government of Bill Davis is trying to give the impression that they are concerned about the welfare of hospital workers—especially those who are still unorganized. So, having been backed into a corner by the organized workers and forced to cough up some hard cash, the capitalists treacherously turn around and pretend to be concerned about giving the unorganized workers 'equal treatment'. For instance, K-W Hospital workers, who are presently organizing themselves into a union, were offered the same increases (at least they've been told they'll get the same increases) as the Toronto hospital workers and the workers at St. Mary's Hospital. This announcement comes from the board of capitalist directors of K-W Hospital.

This is a clear example of the lying, corrupt nature of the capitalist class. It is clear that these characters would think nothing of continuing their vicious exploitation of hospital workers if the workers themselves were not organized and prepared to fight against that exploitation. It is also clear that these capitalists would think nothing of continuing to viciously exploit the unorganized workers if they thought that would serve their greed for maximum profits best. But with strong sentiment among the unorganized hospital workers to get organized, it serves the interests of the capitalists best to give the impression that they are 'fair' capitalists at the present time. This has the possibility of undermining the growing unity of the hospital workers and the capitalists will always be able to continue their vicious exploitation at a later date when conditions are more favourable to them.

But the unorganized hospital workers are not and will not be taken in by this fake concern of the monopoly capitalists. It is quite evident that the trend among hospital workers is a trend of growing unity and militancy and no tricks of the monopoly capitalists can undermine this movement.

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this means increased profit and rate of profit.

The I.W.A. has also taken a firm stand against the seven-day work week. The seven day work week greatly disrupts the social and family lives of workers, forcing them to work weekends and to have their days off in the middle of the week. But the capitalists, in their greed for maximum profits, are still pushing for it.

The woodworkers have made it clear, that should F.I.R. not give up these ruthless proposals, the coast woodworkers will strike on these issues. Some militant trade unionists have said that a strike this year in the forest industry would shut it down entirely—pulp and paper, wood chips and bi-products, as well as sawmills, planer-mills, shinglemills and logging.

# In China: Medicine serves the working people

Since the Liberation of China in 1949, and especially since the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1965, medicine in the People's Republic of China has been revolutionised to serve the working people. Before Liberation, China had very few doctors. The country was under the heel of imperialism. Foreign doctors came to China in scores, but they settled in the large cities such as Shanghai, in the foreign concessions, where they made their fortune in treating the ailments of the rich Chinese and foreigners. There were very few Chinese Western trained doctors in China before Liberation. Most of these doctors had been trained in the capitalist medical ethic of making a fortune for oneself through ruthless exploitation of the misfortune of the masses. There are countless stories of poor peasants and workers in pre-Liberation China turning to a Chinese Western-trained doctor for help, only to be turned away because the poor could not pay the exorbitant fees of the doctor. Finally, there were the Chinese traditional doctors. But many of these too were quacks who lorded it over the people with whatever knowledge they might possess. These doctors often knew nothing of traditional Chinese medicine (the use of medicinal herbs, acupuncture and numerous methods and treatments), but charged outrageous fees to their patients. In China before 1949, many working people died for lack of medical attention, either because it was simply not available, or, if it was available, then it was beyond the means of the ordinary working man to pay for it.

When China was liberated in 1949, two major tasks faced the Communist Party on the medical front. The first and most pressing was to wipe out the epidemic diseases which had swept through China for decades. The second was to train sufficient medical personnel to serve all the working people.

The epidemics in China were caused by imperialism. Diseases such as venereal disease were directly imported through imperialist aggression against China. Numerous fevers and diseases were a result of the backward condition of Chinese society, especially in the rural areas under the cruel domination of imperialism. Such diseases carried off hundreds and hundreds of thousands of working people. In order to wipe out these diseases, the Communist Party and the government of the People's Republic of China did not call on Western "experts", but mobilised millions upon millions of working people themselves to eradicate the root cause of the diseases. This momentous task was accomplished in the main within the first decade after Liberation. It was accomplished through implementing the line of self-reliance and reliance on the revolutionary masses and smashed the line that a poor and developing country such as China must rely on foreign imperialism to accomplish anything.

The question of training sufficient medical personnel to meet the needs of the Chinese working people was one that struck at the very roots of the old class society.

In the spring ploughing season, the "barefoot doctors" set up their practice in the fields. During the summer season, when work is heavy, they always prepared to prevent sun and heat stroke. They practice medicine "in the front lines" as it were, right where production is going on. When more difficult cases arise which are beyond their ability, the patient is transferred to the commune

Continued

health clinic. The "barefoot doctors" often go along to take care of the patient and to further their knowledge.

In addition to the increase in numbers of the "barefoot doctors", medical workers from urban areas have settled in large numbers in the countryside. For example, in northeast China's Kirin province, more than 8,000 urban medical workers have gone to settle in the countryside since the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. As a result of this influx from the cities and of new graduates, the number of medical workers has doubled since 1965. Leading members and experienced doctors of the provincial People's Hospital have settled in the countryside. Former urban medical workers have played a significant role in training "barefoot doctors" from among the rural youth. They have helped to establish hospitals in rural areas, and they tour the countryside giving check-ups, training rural medical workers and supporting the mass movement to improve rural health work.

Furthermore, important developments such as the co-operative medical system have been established and are expanding. The system operates at the production brigade level. Because in the early days after Liberation, patients had access to doctors but often not enough money to pay for their services, a number of brigades in the late 1950's agreed that each member of the brigade would pay one yuan a year into a fund. The brigade further allocated a subsidy from the collective welfare fund so that enough money was on hand to cover any medical expenses. The system was popularised throughout the country during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The great strides which Chinese medicine has made since Liberation, and especially since the Cultural Revolution, are due to the leadership of the Communist Party of China. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the state and all its resources are used to defend the interests of the working people. By mobilising the revolutionary masses, China has stood up and conquered the backward medical past which imperialism had imposed on it.

## The progress of hospitals in China

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution the entire practice of medicine was revolutionised in China. At the Kwangtung Provincial People's Hospital, for example, with 600 beds and over 1,000 staff members, the masses of workers rose up against the old ideas and habits and firmly established revolutionary medicine at the hospital. Before the Cultural Revolution, patients had to stand in long lines to register and if the office was closed before they registered, they were turned away. Poor and lower-middle peasants were then not admitted even though they had come a great distance for needed hospitalisation. At the same time, a small number of people who sought positions in order to make a career, firmly implanted the system of private rooms and acted as if the hospital were their manor.

The hospital revolutionaries smashed the high-class private room system and raised the question in the hospital: Whom should medicine serve? Their prompt answer was that the hospital must serve the broad masses of workers and peasants.

Right away they began to do away with the unreasonable rules and regulations. The out-patient department did away with limiting the number of patients and the registration hours. In order to avoid turning away patients, a 30-bed ward was set up in the out-patient department to serve them

As a result of wide-spread political discussion, the system of "Doctors move their lips, nurses move their feet" was brought under attack. In fact, the entire division of the hospital into departments came under fire. Nurses began to do work which was considered only the preserve of the doctors before.

Before the doctors had waited in the hospital for the patients to come to them. But Comrade Norman Bethune, the great Canadian Communist doctor who went to China to help the Chinese people in their War of Resistance Against Japan, taught that the doctor must never wait for his patients, but go to them, even if that means going to the front lines of the battlefield. Medical teams were therefore set up which went to the factories and gave workers treatment there.

# A model woman doctor

Medical workers in China are learning from the example of the late woman doctor, Li Yueh-hua who worked wholeheartedly for the working people and died at the age of 33 in Anhwei Province in East China. The local peasants said of her devotion to the cause of the working people, "She had the same sense of responsibility as Dr. Norman Bethune". Dr. Li strove hard to practice Comrade Bethune's "utter devotion to others without any thought of self." She was ready at all times to go out on a call. On one occassion, she worked so long saving a mother whose child was in a transverse position that when she had succeeded in inducing the birth, she herself fainted from exhaustion. Once she went out only five days after she herself had given birth to a child. Her own home became a "consulting room" and she would always prepare a bed if there were no room in the hospital for a patient needing hospital treatment.

In August, 1971 Dr Li handed in her application to become a member of the Communist Party of China However, at the end of August, she took seriously ill At 10 pm on August 30, a patient was admitted in a very serious condition As no other doctor was on hand, Dr. Li got out of her sickbed and operated on the patient, saving her life. However, the very next day, Dr. Li's illness took a sharp turn for the worse Every effort to save her failed.

The peasants buried the doctor at the entrance to their village and for one month afterwards the people from all around streamed to the village to pay homage to their beloved doctor. The local Party committee posthumously admitted her into the Communist Party and the Anhwei Provincial Party Committee called on Party members, cadres and people to learn from her dauntless example. ——— From PCDN —

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**On The Line is produced voluntarily by a staff of workers in the Kitchener area.**

Editor—Bill Aird

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# Fully support the workers' right to

The strike struggles of the transportation and communications workers have brought to the fore the question of the significance of collective agreements. In particular, the question of the workers' fundamental right to re-open their collective agreements whenever it serves their interests to do so. For instance, the government has accused the postal workers of waging an illegal strike struggle because, according to the terms of their collective agreement, they are not allowed to engage in work stoppages for the duration of their contract, which expires in December, 1974. The government is holding the postal workers to the terms of the agreement in spite of the fact that the government itself has violated the spirit and letter of the agreement in every way. This shows that while the capitalists insist that the workers abide by the terms of a collective agreement, the capitalist class never applies this law to itself. All the current strike struggles clearly show, however, that the working class has no intention either of abiding by the arbitrary wishes of the capitalists. The working class is becoming increasingly aware that the right to strike cannot be legislated by any law other than that determined by the interests of the working class.

The workers sign a collective agreement with the capitalists in order to limit the super-exploitation of their labour by the monopoly capitalist class. In its insatiable greed for profits, the main aim of the capitalist class is to pay the workers the lowest possible wages, make them work under the worst conditions and give them no job security whatsoever. When the workers don't have collective bargaining rights, but must bargain with the capitalists on a one-to-one basis, the worker will every time get the raw end of the deal, because if he protests, he will be fired and replaced with another worker. This means that so long as the workers are unorganised and remain scattered and isolated individuals, competition in their ranks is very sharp and they have no recourse to defend themselves. When the workers win the right to bargain collectively, however, the capitalists must accept not to lower the wages of the workers and not cause their working conditions to deteriorate, while the workers agree to sell their labour power to the capitalists so long as the capitalist abides by the terms of the contract.

In practice, however, as soon as it is in their interest to do so, the capitalists violate the spirit and letter of the collective agreements. For instance, in the contract signed between the Maritime Employers' Association (M.E.A.) and the Montreal longshoremen, a wage security clause guarantees the longshoremen a basic 40-hour week during the 37 week long season from April to December. Using the strike struggle of the St. Lawrence river pilots as a pretext, the capitalists claimed that there was no work for the longshoremen and that therefore they were no longer responsible for paying the workers their full wages. According to the capitalists, the river pilots' strike was a "major crises that stopped the arrival of the ships to their destination", which, in the terms of the collective agreement, permits them to waiver the wages clause. This argument was thoroughly denounced by the International Longshoremen's Association. A strike struggle does not constitute a "major crises". Furthermore, the strike struggle did not stop all ships from reaching port. The manner in which the capitalists violate their own laws was also exemplified by the Shipping Federation of Canada during the strike struggle of the St. Lawrence river pilots. The contract between the St. Lawrence river pilots and the Laurentian Pilotage Authority stipulates that no ship can navigate certain parts of the St Lawrence River without a pilot. Nonetheless, during the strike, the Shipping Federation of Canada

# re-open their collective agreements!

openly gave the call to all its members to navigate without pilots. The government took no action whatsoever to stop the implementation of this call.

Another example is the one of Air Canada which used the firemen's strike struggle at federally-controlled airports to break the collective agreement and lay off 4,800 of its employees.

This means that on one hand the workers have to fight to protect the terms of their collective agreement and force the capitalists to abide by them (as in the case of the longshoremen and the St. Lawrence river pilots), and on the other hand, the workers must also re-open their contracts whenever they see fit and force the capitalists to renegotiate them if they no longer meet the needs of the workers (as in the postal workers' strike struggle).

Not only do the capitalists violate the terms of the contract whenever it serves their interests to do so, they also violate the contracts by virtue of the very nature of the monopoly capitalist class to maximise profits. In its attempt to shift the burden of its economic crisis on to the backs of the workers, the monopoly capitalist class is imposing increases in the cost-of-living of 15 per cent per year on the working class. This shows that the capitalist class, by never abandoning its pursuit for maximum profit, is always finding ways and means of lowering the workers' wages and standard of living. What this means is that the capitalist never stops violating the collective agreements in the sense that, through its inflationary economic policies, the monopoly capitalist class is continuously lowering the real wages of the workers For instance, on May 1st a decree will become effective in the construction industry raising the wages by 2 6 per cent which is, according to the union spokesman, in fact a decrease of their real wages of at least 7 per cent This is because during the period covered by the wage increase, the cost-of-living will go up by at least 10 per cent. This shows that so long as the capitalist system continues to function, the capitalist must continuously find ways and means of maximising its profits which changes the conditions under which the contract was signed, making wages clauses and others obsolete.

It is as a result of the present spiralling inflation and correspondant lowering the workers' real wages, that the three largest labour federations in Quebec have called for the re-opening of all collective agreements to update the wage clauses and to include clauses indexing wages to the cost-of-living. It is the fundamental right of the workers to re-open their collective agreements in order to negotiate new clauses consistent with their interests. It does not matter how much the capitalist insists that it is "illegal" to do so because when the capitalists howl, it is a sure sign that the workers have the monopoly capitalists in a bargaining position On one hand, the workers must oppose all the attempts of the monopoly capitalist class to violate the collective agreements. At the same time, it is the fundamental right of the working class to re-open their collective agreements

**From PCDN —**

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### Montreal

# Uniroyal workers vote 97% to strike

On Wednesday, April 17, the 700 workers of the Uniroyal company in Montreal launched a strike. These workers are members of Local 78 of the International Union of Synthetic Rubber Workers. The last strike at Uniroyal took place in 1943. On One Uniroyal worker stated that with all these years without any strikes, "it's not surprising that our economic position and standard of living is going down more and more!"

The monopoly capitalists, however, like those of Uniroyal, are continually increasing their profits and use every means to maintain their privileges as long as possible. The workers, conscious of this unjust situation, have ever since the beginning of negotiations shown a strong desire to go on strike. They denounced on a day-to-day basis and without letup the increase in the cost of living and those who caused its increase.

In the first general union meeting the workers learned that the company's wage offer was a 60 cent increase over a three-year period. Right there in the meeting hall the workers gave their staunch reply to this ridiculous offer. They vigorously protested and denounced the insulting offer that the Uniroyal monopoly capitalists had made them. A young worker suggested they stop doing overtime, and this was accepted by all the workers present. The position of the union in the face of this wage offer was to give the slogan that there would be a real battle if the situation didn't change. A new non-unionised worker was even fired by a foreman for refusing to do overtime. He wanted to unite with the rest of the workers in the plant. The workers again gave tit-for-tat to the repressive attacks of the company and succeeded, with the help of their union, in having the worker reinstated.

At Uniroyal a strike was the only solution for the workers. The capitalists made a new wage offer to try to have the contract accepted. This offer was based on an increase of 45 cents in the first year and 35 cents in the second year of a two-year contract. Faced with this second insult, the Uniroyal workers gave the capitalists a lesson and voted 97.4 per cent in favour of a strike.

Workers at the Uniroyal tire plant on Strange Street here in Kitchener have also voted 98.5 per cent in favour of strike action to back up their demands for decent wages, benefits and a cost-of-living clause. —— **From PCDN** —

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**Douglas from page 12**

leaflets at the plant gate. Mr. J. Kirkby, President of local 1967 U.A.W. received the following letter, dated February 12, 1974 from Mr. E. P. Birch, Manager, Personnel Operations at Douglas Aircraft:

Dear Mr. Kirkby:

On January 18th, 1974 I advised you of the Company's concern regarding distribution of unauthorized bulletins.

Since that time two unauthorized bulletins have been issued at the Company gates by local 1967 Union Officers, including yourself.

This is to inform you that any attempt to dispense unauthorized bulletins by any individuals will be stopped in future. Trespassers will be ordered off Company property and the assistance of the Police will be obtained if necessary.

E. P. Birch,
Manager, Personnel Operations

This clearly exposed the interests of Douglas in union "democracy". In class society, democracy is for one class or the other. The Douglas capitalists have all the 'democratic'' rights to attempt to wipe out the workers' union, while the workers have to wage a struggle just to distribute the leaflets of their union. However, the

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workers to organize for their own defence. The capitalists would be entirely pleased with themselves if they could succeed in reducing the workers to helpless slaves to be used at the whim of the capitalists for 'profit'. The capitalist line on the trade unions is an ugly, reactionary cancer on society which wrecks the lives and destroys the dignity of millions of working people.

It is of pressing importance for militant workers, activists in the trade unions and leftists to understand clearly this basic fact of class conflict on the the question of Trade Unions. The practice of the class conscious worker in the Trade Unions should be based on this fact of class struggle. It is the work of the most advanced workers to build unity in the Trade Unions on this fundamental question of opposing the aims of the capitalist class which are to disrupt, smash up and destroy the workers defence organizations. This can never be done if the advanced elements develop unity on the basis of class struggle. It is also the task of advanced workers--and an equally important task--to help organize the unorganized workers and to persist in this work despite anything the capitalists may do to suppress it.

The interests of the working class are completely opposed to the interest of the capitalists. We should not lose sight of this fact for one minute—especially on the question of Trade Unions. Too many people who pride themselves on being advanced or class conscious or "left-wing" do not grasp this essential fact. These people find some reactionary leaders in the trade union movement or some small point they disagree with in the policy or organization of the Trade Unions and use this as an excuse to discard the whole existing trade union movement. They then promote diversions which waste the energy of a great many people but serve nothing.

This type of activity is carried on by people who do not grasp the essential role of the Trade unions in the class struggle. instead of strengthening and expanding the Trade Union Movement these people actually weaken the defence organizations of the working classwhich is in line with the interests of the capitalist class. It is extremely important in this time of growing economic crisis in the capitalist system that all trends which disrupt or weaken the Trade unions be opposed and abolished and the Trade union Movement be built for the defence of the workers.

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Douglas workers are not fooled. They are learning that democratic rights for the working class will only be won by waging an irreconcilable struggle against the "rights" of the capitalist class.

As the economic situation in Canada deteriorates, the capitalists are shifting the brunt of the crisis onto the workers. They are trying to wipe out the existing unions or make them harmless appendages of the capitalists in order to leave the workers defenceless against their attacks. Without a union to defend them on the economic front, workers will be reduced to little more than straight forward slaves. The Douglas workers are increasingly aware of this fact.

All these attacks and provocations by the Douglas capitalists have only increased the hatred and the resistance of the Douglas workers. Instead of being split, the workers are uniting more closely. They are strengthening their resolve to fight even harder when their contract with Douglas expires in September.

In the upcoming battle to force a new contract out of the Douglas capitalists in September, the Douglas workers are sure to strengthen their unity and fight with the same spirit with which they took on the capitalist class in their 1971 struggle.

**From PCDN**

# Douglas Aircraft workers defend their Union

Four thousand workers at Douglas Aircraft in Toronto are waging a battle to defend their union from the attacks of the Douglas capitalists. The escalation in the attacks on the union began when the workers waged a strike struggle for higher wages in 1971 after the Douglas capitalists tried to impose onto the Canadian workers the same wage freeze the U.S. government had forced on the American workers. This bold stand, in defiance of the entire capitalist class, terrified the Douglas capitalists and the U.S. imperialist chieftains. Since that time, the Douglas capitalists have been trying to smash up the workers' union, U.A.W. local 1967.

From January 1972 to January 1974, over 90 union officers have been "disciplined". "Sentences" ranged from 3 days to 30 days suspension and twelve officers have been discharged. Approximately 170 other workers have been discharged during that same period. Furthermore, also in the same period, over 994 workers have been forced to quit due to the harassment and poor working conditions at Douglas.

On October 1, 1973, Douglas fired the entire union bargaining committee of local 1967, which included the chairman of the local. The bargaining committee had been on the picket line of the Artistic Woodworkers to support their just struggle. To split the growing unity of the Douglas workers and Artistic workers and especially to continue their attacks against local 1967, they fired the bargaining committee. Over 500 workers walked out of Douglas for a day in protest. The workers have been financially supporting the discharged bargaining committee while they are struggling to force the company to rehire them.

The union has been trying to fight back using a legal form of struggle, that is, through the grievance and arbitration procedure. By stalling and raising numerous technical objections, the Douglas Aircraft capitalists have done everything to make the arbitration procedure ineffective for the workers. As of March, 1974 there were approximately 220 grievances alone slated for arbitration of which 20 are policy grievances dating back to January 1969. Fifty-six of these are layoff or failure to recall dating back to 1972 and there are 133 regular grievances to be heard. These date back from January 1969. Many of these grievances, if lost by Douglas, would force Douglas to pay out quite a bit of money in back wages. In order to put off paying this money, Douglas keeps firing more workers so that these grievances (which have priority) will keep the other grievances from being heard.

By firing the union representatives, the company is attempting to split the workers' ranks. Douglas sent letters to all the workers' homes under the hoax of "keeping employees informed" in which the union was attacked as "irresponsible". To unite the workers, the union issued several leaflets explaining recent events and exposing the company's real intentions. In order to split the workers' ranks, the company put up a notice which arrogantly attempted to meddle in the internal affairs of the union, claiming that local 1967 should be more democratic. The text of the notice reads: "The best Union is a strong Union representing all of its' Membership, and a strong Union is one which has an **informed Membership** who actively participate in the decision-making processes of their Union". Secondly, the company called the police to stop the distribution of the union

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